

Message Text

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E.O.: 11652: N/A

TAGS: EINV, SA

SUBJ: TRIANGULAR INVESTMENT MISSION

SUMMARY: TIMAN MISSION WAS A QUALIFIED SUCCESS IN SAUDI ARABIA. ON THE POSITIVE SIDE WERE 1) THE MISSION MADE A VERY FAVORABLE IMPRESSION; 2) THE MEMBERS WERE HIGHLY COMPETENT AND ABLY ATTEMPTED TO COUNTER THE IMPRESSION GIVEN BY THE TIME NEWSTOUR THAT SAUDI INVESTMENT WOULD NOT BE WELCOME IN THE U.S.; 3) SOME SOLID BEGINNINGS TOWARD BUSINESS WERE MADE, ESPECIALLY IN THE AGRI-BUSINESS AND POSSIBLY THE CONSTRUCTION AREA. ON THE NEGATIVE SIDE, MANY TOP LEVEL SAUDI GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS WERE OUT OF TOWN, AND BECAUSE OF LATE ARRIVAL OF ADVANCE MAN A FEW OTHER MEETINGS COULD NOT BE ARRANGED. END SUMMARY.

1. THE TRIANGULAR INVESTMENT MISSION TO THE ARAB NATIONS WAS MADE UP OF MORE THAN USUALLY CAPABLE AMERICAN BUS-

INESSMEN. THE GROUP MET WITH MINCOMMERCE, DIRECTOR OF INDUSTRIAL STUDIES AND DEVELOPMENT CENTER, MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND CENTRAL PLANNING OFFICE OFFICIALS IN UNCLASSIFIED

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RIYADH. THEY WERE ENTERTAINED AT DINNER BY CHAMBER OF

COMMERCE IN RIYADH AND IN SMALL DINNER PARTIES BY A NUMBER OF JIDDA BUSINESSMEN. THEY WERE ALSO BRIEFED BY THE AMBASSADOR AND THE GOVERNOR OF SAMA.

2. APPOINTMENTS WITH OTHER HIGH LEVEL SAUDI OFFICIAL WERE NOT POSSIBLE. DETAILS HAD BEEN PLACED IN HANDS OF ISDC BY MISSION COORDINATOR, AND LATE ARRIVAL OF TIMAN ADVANCE MAN FOUND THAT MANY APPOINTMENTS HAD NOT BEEN MADE AND COULD NOT BE MADE ON SHORT NOTICE. KING FAISAL WAS NOT AVAILABLE AND MINSTATE FINANCE, PRESIDENT AND VICE PRESIDENT OF COP, ETC. WERE OUT OF COUNTRY OR ILL. PRIVATE SAUDI BUSINESS PARTICIPATION IN RIYADH WAS ALSO LESS THAN DESIRED.

3. DESPITE RELATIVELY LOW LEVEL OF OFFICIALS INVOLVED, BRIEFINGS RECEIVED BY BUSINESSMEN BY MINAGRICULTURE, AND CPO WERE OF HIGH QUALITY. GROUP VISITED ROYAL TECHNICAL INSTITUTE AND RECEIVED FULL MORNING BRIEFING BY MINCOMMERCE, AND HEADS OF ISDC, AS WELL AS BY MANAGING DIRECTOR OF ARAB INVESTMENT COMPANY AND SAUDI INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT FUND. GROUP WAS EXTREMELY RESPONSIVE TO BRIEFING BY AMBASSADOR.

4. NOT ONLY DID GROUP RESPOND FAVORABLY IN AMBASSADOR'S PRESENCE AND TO EMBOFFS, THEY ALSO APPOINTED THEMSELVES UNOFFICIAL AMBASSADORS TO COUNTER IMPRESSION THAT TIME NEWSTOUR GROUP HAD LEFT THAT SAUDI MONEY WOULD NOT BE WELCOME IN THE U.S. VARIOUS SPOKESMEN MADE THE POINT THAT SAUDI INVESTMENT WOULD BE WELCOME, AND WERE PARTICULARLY EFFECTIVE WITH MINCOMMERCE AND SAMA GOVERNOR.

5. VARIOUS OPPORTUNITIES WERE OFFERED TO DO BUSINESS WITH INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS SEPARATED FROM GROUP TO MEET WITH OFFICIALS IN PETROMIN, MINISTRY OF HEALTH, ETC. HOTEL LOBBY ACTIVITIES AND DINNER CONTACTS IN JIDDA ALSO PRODUCED SOME CONCRETE RESULTS.

6. EMBASSY WAS PARTICULARLY GRATEFUL FOR EFFORTS OF TIMAN COORDINATOR BIRD AND OPIC ADVANCE MAN MIDDLETON. BECAUSE OF INCREASING DEMANDS ON INELASTIC STAFF, EMBASSY HAD UNCLASSIFIED

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MADE IT CLEAR THAT OUR PHYSICAL SUPPORT WOULD BE AT A MINIMUM. BOTH INDIVIDUALS PERFORMED ADMIRABLY IN AN UNFAMILIAR ENVIRONMENT, AND ARE LARGELY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE VERY FAVORABLE IMPRESSION WHICH TIMAN LEFT WITH THE SAUDIS. EXPERIENCES OF THIS MISSION WILL HELP LAY THE GROUNDWORK FOR A MORE REALISTIC ASSESSMENT OF WHAT SERVICES EMBASSY JIDDA CAN PROVIDE FOR MISSIONS IN THE FUTURE.

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